

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-10
OMB-01 IO-13 SSM-05 /081 W
-----210439Z 104825 /12

R 201509Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3182

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 3204

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SUMMARY FOR MAY 20, 1977

1. ALL MEDIA LED WITH RETURN OF AL-ASSAD FROM TRIPARTITE
SUMMIT IN RIYADH. BAATH HEADLINED "DISCUSSION OF SITUATION
IN THE AREA AND EFFORTS REQUIRED FOR SECURING ARAB RIGHTS
FULLY." PRESS REPORTED THAT MEETINGS DEALT WITH "ARAB
SITUATION IN LIGHT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTACTS HELD
BY AL-ASSAD AND SADAT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER." ARTICLES
STATED THEY ALSO DISCUSSED FAHD'S FORTHCOMING US VISIT AND
"THE AFTERMATH OF THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS." VIEWPOINTS OF THE
THREE LEADERS CHARACTERIZED AS "IDENTICAL" ON ALL TOPICS
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DISCUSSED.

2. VISIT OF WALID JUMBLATT AT HEAD OF LARGE PSP DELEGATION
ALSO RECEIVED PROMINENT FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT. DELEGATION
MET MAY 19 WITH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COMMAND MEMBERS
INCLUDING DEPSEC GEN ABDALLAH AL-AHMAR AFTER PREVIOUS MEETING
WITH FONMIN KHADDAM AND MIN OF STATE FOR PRESIDENTIAL

AFFAIRS ADIB MILHIM. RADIO DAMASCUS AT 2:15 LT MAY 20
REPORTED THAT PRES. AL-ASSAD HAD MET WITH JUMBLATT.

3. CAIRO AGREEMENT. PRESS CONTINUED TO CREATE IMPRESSION
THAT AGREEMENT WAS NEAR ON IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO AGREEMENT.
IT REPORTED MEETING FATAH CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER ABU MAZIN
HELD WITH SAUDI KING KHALID MAY 18 AND SUBSEQUENT MEETING ABU
MAZIN AND KHALID AL-HASAN HAD WITH CROWN PRINCE FAHD. ARTICLE
REPORTED THAT "EFFORTS EXERTED TO REACH AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
LEBANESE AUTHORITIES AND THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE WERE DISCUSSED.
ANOTHER ARTICLE SAID THAT AMBASSADORS OF QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE
CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS TOWARDS EXPEDITING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
AGREEMENT. ARTICLE STATED THAT ARAB AND LEBANESE CONDITIONS
"ENCOURAGED OPTIMISM" THAT RESOLUTION OF THIS QUESTION
IMMINENT WHICH WOULD IN TURN BE PRELUDE TOWARDS COMPLETE
STABILITY THROUGHOUT LEBANON." INFORMED SOURCES" PREDICTED
QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE WOULD HOLD FORMAL MEETING
MAY 21, AND AMB. SHAIR STATED THAT "THANKS TO GOOD INTENTIONS
OF ALL CONCERNED PARTIES SITUATION WILL MOVE TOWARDS
TOTAL CLARITY."

4. ELECTION COMMENTARY. THAWRA EDITORIAL DECLARED THAT
LIKUD VICTORY HAD CREATED GENERAL SENSE OF SKEPTISM
TOWARDS ME PEACE EFFORTS AND REPEATED CHARGE THAT ISRAEL'S
"AGGRESSIVE POLICY" REMAINED THE SAME REGARDLESS OF WHICH
PARTY IN POWER. ARABS CALLED UPON TO UNDERTAKE MILITARY
PREPARATIONS. AMID KHULI IN AL-BAATH CLAIMED BEGIN'S
FORMING OF NEW CABINET PLACED AREA ON THRESHOLD OF NEW
WAR AND JEOPARDIZED DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS. HE CREDITED
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DETERIORATING SITUATION IN ISRAEL TO EFFECTS OF
OCTOBER WAR. HE SAID BEGIN'S ELECTION (SIC) MUST BE
MOTIVE FOR ARABS TO REASSESS THEIR STRATEGY. JIBRAN KURIYYA
IN TISHRIIN ASSERTED THAT LIKUD'S POLICY TIED TO WHAT US
POLICY PERMITS IT. HE CLAIMED THAT IF US WISHED TO SEEK
COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION, ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WOULD BE UNABLE
TO DEFY IT. HE NOTED THAT ARABS READY TO CONTINUE SEEKING
JUST AND LASTING PEACE. "WHAT THE ARABS DECIDE IS
DETERMINED BY THEIR OWN FREE WILL ALONE, NOT BE
ANY DEVELOPMENT TAKING PLACE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. MAY 20
DAMASCUS RADIO COMMENTARY DECLARED THAT MILITARY PREPAREDNESS
SHOULD BE MAIN TOOL FOR REGAINING THE OCCUPIED LANDS.
COMMENT: DESPITE NEW EMPHASIS ON NEED FOR MILITARY PREPARED-
NESS, OVERALL SYRIAN COMMENTARY MAKES CLEAR THAT SARG STILL
READY TO COOPERATE IN PEACE EFFORTS BUT SEES US ATTITUDE
AS KEY.
MURPHY

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